

Message Text

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61

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 L-03 OPR-02 RSC-01 RSR-01 /028 W

----- 034581

R 231737Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8339

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 4480

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, AREC, PQ, PN

SUBJECT: USE BY US EMB OF PAN CANAL COMMISSARY

REF: STATE 167078

1) PANAMANIAN NOTE ON COMMISSARY PRIVILEGES FORWARDED
TO DEPARTMENT AUGUST 22 IN POUCH NO. KT-1669.

2) I CONSIDER THAT PANAMANIAN NOTE MUST BE ANSWERED.
GOP HAS CHALLENGED A TREATY RIGHT OF USG WHICH WE HAVE
EXERCISED FOR 36 YEARS. IF WE LET IT GO UNANSWERED IT
CONSTITUTES TACIT ACCEPTANCE BY THE USG OF THE
PANAMANIAN POSITION. I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT WE CAN
ACCEPT GOP EFFORTS TO ERODE OUR TREATY POSITION,
ESPECIALLY ON A RIGHT WE WANT TO PRESERVE IN THE NEW
TREATY, WITHOUT UNDERMINING OUR BARGAINING POSITION.
NOR WOULD I AGREE THAT THE PANAMANIAN NOTE CAN BE
ANSWERED ORALLY BECAUSE THAT LEAVES NOTHING IN THE
PANAMANIAN RECORD.

3) I SHARE DEPARTMENT'S VIEW THAT THESE EXCHANGES OF
NOTES DO NOT HELP RELATIONS AND I WOULD PREFER THAT THE
GOP NOT SEND THEM. BUT THE GOP DOES NOT SHARE THIS
VIEW AND WE CANNOT IGNORE ITS NOTES IF THE FOREIGN
MINISTRY PERSISTS IN SENDING THEM. IN VEILED WAY GOP HAS
PUT US ON NOTICE THAT ITS NEXT STEP MAY BE TO SEIZE GOODS
PURCHASED BY DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL. WE CAN EXPECT SUCH A
STEP BECAUSE GOP HAS ALREADY TAKEN SUCH ACTION ON USG
PROPERTY OF CANAL AGENCIES BROUGHT INTO PANAMA FOR
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REPAIRS AND THEN PUBLICIZED SEIZURES FOR PROPAGANDA

ADVANTAGE.

4) IN SUM, I WOULD CONSIDER IT SERIOUS ERROR NOT TO
REPLY BECAUSE A) NOTE IS SIMPLY FIRST STEP IN PROCESS,
AND WE CAN EXPECT FURTHER AND MORE SERIOUS HARASSMENT,
AND B) FAILURE TO REPLY UNDERMINES OUR TREATY RIGHTS
AND OUR NEGOTIATING POSITION.
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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 23 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Drafter: n/a
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Executive Order: GS SAYRE
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Office: ACTION ARA
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30 JUN 2005

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TAGS: PFOR, AREC, PQ, PN
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